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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [SENV PREL EIND KSCA PGOV IS ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY](#)

SUBJECT: SHIMON PERES ASKS ADMINISTRATOR JOHNSON FOR EPA
ADVICE ON HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

REF: A. TEL AVIV 5044

[B](#). 04 TEL AVIV 6550

[C](#). 04 TEL AVIV 2901

[1](#)1. Vice Prime Minister Shimon Peres has written to USEPA Administrator Johnson requesting that a team of 2-3 EPA experts visit Israel for one week to advise on sustainable solutions for the Ramat Hovav chemical industry and hazardous waste disposal site located in the Negev. Embassy has provided the text of the letter to EPA, NEA and OES, along with a recent tender for consulting services that provides extensive information about Ramat Hovav. The Israeli Embassy will be delivering the original of the letter to USEPA.

[1](#)2. The Ramat Hovav Industrial Park includes 17 industrial plants which produce a variety of hazardous wastes, Israel's only hazardous waste treatment plant, and a wastewater treatment plant with 150 hectares of evaporation ponds. The issue of Ramat Hovav is a very important one for the GOI, as it will have a direct impact on Israel's development plans for the Negev. There is a dispute between the Ministry of Environment and the industries at the site, with MOE wanting all hazardous liquids eliminated at Ramat Hovav and industry wanting to pipe some treated effluents to the sea.

[1](#)3. The EPA team would be advising a court-appointed mediator in the ongoing dispute between the companies at the site and MOE regarding allowable discharges. Israel is looking for both subject matter and regulatory advice, including what technologies are available to address problems at the site and economic/regulatory approaches that could support a sustainable solution. An ideal team might include an economics/regulatory expert, someone knowledgeable about the chemistries of the wastes at the site, and a technology expert. As VPM Peres notes in his letter to Administrator Johnson, the mediator is to conclude his work by the end of [1](#)2005.

[1](#)4. The Peres letter notes that the Israeli side will cover the expenses of the EPA team. Embassy asks that EPA provide an estimate of those costs. Embassy point of contact for the requested visit is ESTH Officer Bob Tansey, TanseyRJ@state.gov.

Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

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Classified SIPRNET website.

JONES